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## Santos: Colombia peace talks to open in Oslo next month

BOGOTA (AFP) - Peace talks between Colombia's government and its largest rebel group will begin next month in a bid to end Latin America's last and longest-running armed yesterday.

The first such negotiations in a decade on ending nearly 50 years of fighting will begin in Oslo in the first half of October before moving to Havana, President Juan Manuel Santos said, adding that the talks "will be measured in months, not years."

However, during the talks the army will keep up military operations against the guerrillas, known as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, and there will be no demilitarized zone set up, as was the case during the last failed talks in 2002, the president said in an address to the nation.

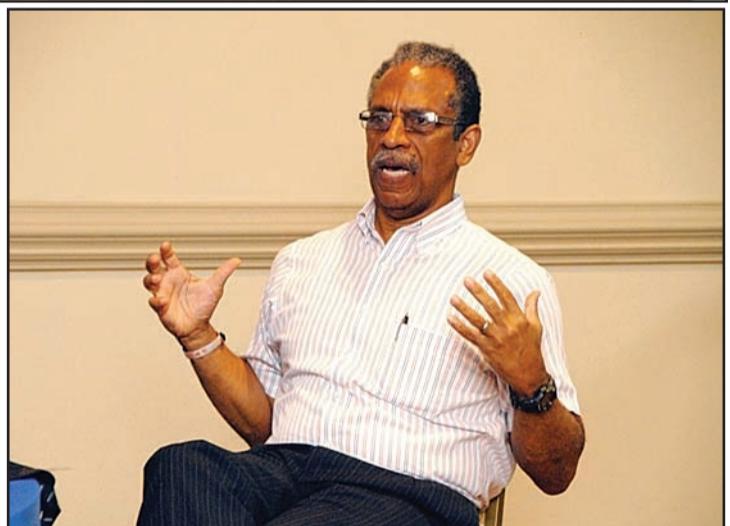
Santos said these points feature in an agenda agreed with the rebels in preliminary talks held in Havana over the past six months. "Military operations will continue with the same or even greater intensity," he said.

*Continued on page 2*

The participants left the first HIV/AIDS congress organized in Aruba full of knowledge



ORANJESTAD - Aruba hosted the first CHART-CCAS-CMLG Joint Meeting and the 9th HIV/AIDS workshop during the week of August 26th to August 30th. The conference took place in the Alhambra casino ballroom, where most of the conference participants flew in from different islands in the Caribbean region. There was also a group of participants from Aruba and Europe as well. The main idea of this conference was to create a synergy between the lab technologists, doctors, other experts in the field and the community of the Caribbean in order to improve HIV prevention on the islands. A large group of experts on the subject of HIV also visited our island to share their knowledge on this topic to the participants. The importance of this symposium was to exchange knowledge and expertise between not only the delegates but also between the experts. The reproduction of HIV/AIDS and how it can be treated was thoroughly discussed during this congress. This virus can now be detected at an earlier stage which gives the HIV/AIDS



carrier the possibility of living a longer life as opposed to back in the days.

*Continued on page 5*



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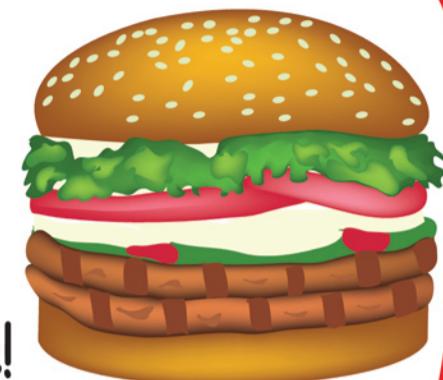
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## First General Practitioners to graduate in Aruba



ORANJESTAD -- Through a specially designed program together with the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam, three professionals were able to complete a course of specialization as 'House Doctors' here in Aruba. Last week, the three doctors, Yvette Thuis, Melisa Wever and Dianthe Bikker received their diplomas in the presence of family members, friends and other invitees in the Cas Di Cultura.

Director of IMSAN, Dr. Joel Rajnherc, under whose supervision the program resorts, expressed how proud he is of the three young doctors who demonstrate a real heart for their profession. Ranjherc explained that the diploma received by the three doctors is equivalent to any study for doctors in the Netherlands.

The government explained

that work is being done to not only fortify our general practitioners, who are the 'first line' of medical service, but also in upgrading doctors' assistants and specialists. This, they hope will help minimize the wait time for patients to receive medical assistance.

The special specialization program was quite a lengthy journey for these three doctors. Three other doctors are about to begin the program shortly. According to the government, our General Practitioners (House Doctors) must be seen as health coaches. It is the 'house doctor' who refers a patient to a specialist and other care situations. He/she guides the patient on every level of their health.

The Morning News joins Aruba in congratulating our three 'House Doctors' with their new accomplishment!

## New policy for tourist residence permit extension by DIMAS

ORANJESTAD -- DIMAS has recently announced their new policy with respect to visitor extension for tourist residence on the island.

In order to qualify for a residence extension as a tourist, the visitor must prove that:

- they are of Dutch na-

tionality, or

- owner of timeshare, house or a yacht larger than 14 meters, or
- their guarantor in Aruba has free residence status or is a family member, or
- their guarantor in Aruba is a Dutch citizen born here and is a family member.

Minor children can receive visitor extension only during the long vacation period (June to August).

For more information, please contact the DIMAS at their offices located in the Wilhelminastraat 31-33, or online at [www.dimasaruba.com](http://www.dimasaruba.com).

## First HIV/AIDS congress organized...

Continued from page 1



The number of people living with HIV/AIDS has increased during the past years and for this reason this con-

gress was organized where experts can come together and create a prevention plan against HIV/AIDS. For this

prevention plan we must take into account that the HIV/AIDS situation is different on each island and the plan needs to be adapted for each island, keeping in mind the community and culture of the island.

The participants of this conference returned to their home with a lot of information regarding this topic and how they can assist people living with HIV/AIDS and also a lot of information from where they can create a prevention plan for their island based on their needs.

Aruba would like to thank all experts who travelled to our island to attend this conference and all the participants. A big 'thank you' also goes out to the organizers of this congress and members of the press for their support to this conference and keeping the community of Aruba well informed'.

## Colombia peace talks...

Continued from page 1

The United States welcomed the news, with President Barack Obama congratulating Santos. "The Santos administration has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to seeking a durable peace and ensuring a better life for all Colombians through its security and social inclusion policies," the US leader said.

"The FARC should now take this opportunity to end its decades of terrorism and narcotics trafficking, and allow the Colombian people to continue building a democratic, prosper-

ous, and just society," the White House statement said.

Santos said Colombia now has a roadmap that could lead toward a definitive peace accord after nearly half a century of conflict, and he had seemingly conciliatory words for the guerrillas.

"We have worked diligently, and I must acknowledge the FARC also. So far, everything that has been agreed has been respected. If the FARC address the next phase with the same seriousness, we have good prospects," the president said.

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## The Netherlands to give no more aid to Greece

THE HAGUE (AFP) - The Netherlands will not contribute any further aid to debt-ridden Greece, but Athens could be given more time to get its fiscal act together, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said.

"Two major rescue packages have been agreed on for Greece," said Rutte, who represented his People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) during a live televised debate, eight days ahead of Dutch elections. "I would be against that," Rutte said in the encounter held in Amsterdam, but he added: "Greece could get extra time, provided it doesn't cost extra money."

Dutch party leaders were discussing the euro crisis among other issues ahead of September 12 parliamentary elections when voters will go to the polls for the second time in two years to choose a new government.

Rutte's pro-business, liberal VVD is leading in opinion polls and should it win, Rutte was likely to continue as the country's prime minister.

The outgoing Dutch parliament gave Europe's long-term debt rescue plan the green light

in May, despite strenuous opposition from both left and right-wing parties who oppose handing more money to Brussels.

The 500-billion-euro (\$628 billion) ESM was set up as a permanent rescue fund to ease pressure on indebted eurozone nations like Greece, which has been bailed out twice with the help of the EU and IMF, and so prevent contagion across the eurozone. The Netherlands will provide 40 billion euros of the ESM's funding, comprising about 4.6 billion euros paid over five years and more than 35 billion euros more in guarantees.

The Dutch government fell in April after far-right politician Geert Wilders walked out of talks with Rutte's coalition government over budget cuts, prompting the premier to throw in the towel a few days later and call fresh polls.

September 12 is also a crucial day for the ESM with the Constitutional Court in Germany -- Europe's largest economy -- to decide whether German President Joachim Gauck can sign into law the eurozone's key crisis-fighting tool.

## Aruba Bank announces mega clearance car sale!

CAMACURI -- This is the 8th year that Aruba Bank is organizing a mega event for the sale of new cars! This year's event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 15th beginning at 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon until 9:00 o'clock in the evening on the large parking lot of the Aruba Bank Camacuri. Every car and bike dealer is expected to be present for this mega event.

After the very successful Mega Car Sale, Mega Riba Wiel, Mega Night, Mega 777, Mega Fiesta, Mega Feria, Mega Fast 5, Aruba Bank has announced their newest mega event...Mega Clearance Car Sale! This year the bank is celebrating their 8th anniversary of Mega Car Sales and is offering a tremendous Mega Clearance Deal with Mega attractive interests between 8.37% to 8.42%. There will also be the option to choose to begin making payments in January 2013 or an iPad and up to 30% discount on car insurance. In addition, all car and bike dealers will add their special offers and reduced prices.



Clients may apply online via [www.arubabank.com](http://www.arubabank.com) or at one of their branches to ensure pre-approval for their purchase. To apply for a car loan, you will be required to show a valid identification and two latest salary pay slips as well as a reference letter from your employer, and one valid utility receipt.

The Aruba Bank Camacuri parking lot will be turned into a Car Clearance Sale and D'Licious will entertain everyone interested in purchasing a new vehicle. For children, there

will be a Kids Corner and Dino Jump with lots more. Kiwanis Key Club of Aruba will be on site with delicious sandwiches to raise funds for a good cause.

Aruba Bank invites everyone in the market for a new vehicle to visit their favorite car or bike dealer to secure pre-approval, then attend the Mega Car Clearance with family and friends on Saturday, September 15! Together they want to make this the most popular and biggest Mega Car Sale event ever!

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EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

## Digicel launches an inspiring new program: "Be Extraordinary"



Digicel GM Remko van der Veldt with Special Olympics volunteers

Digicel Telecommunications Company, with branches in 30 countries worldwide, is proud to launch their community-building campaign "Be Extraordinary" on Aruba. The announcement of this inspiring program took place during an elegant event around the H2O pool of the Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino on Thursday evening, August 30.

Digicel GM for Aruba, Remko van der Veldt, was proud to explain the program, which honors island residents who have distinguished themselves in varying fields, from athletics and artistic accomplishment, to selfless volunteer work.

One of the first to be honored that evening was long time Digicel employee Andre



Parliamentarian Andin Bikker and Minister Hooyboer join the party

Geerman. He is not only a medal-winning special athlete, but an example to all the community. He demonstrates that many of the mentally challenged can mainstream and perform in the job market admirably. He is an inspiration to his fellow workers and other special athletes.

Over the coming year, other honorees will be announced. Digicel also has plans to have some of the more gifted mentor their customers in various skill sets. Aruba is the sixth Digicel location to implement this program.

"Be Extraordinary" is a na-



Special Olympics committee with honoree Andre Geerman

tural evolution for Digicel," commented Remko van der Veldt. "It demonstrates the company's long-standing policy of community involvement and concern. We in Aruba are proud to be one of the first half dozen to launch this program. It is a celebration, encouraging all who think they are ordinary to aspire to being more." Digicel on Aruba is not new to sponsoring programs for the community; they have sustained local soccer teams for over four years, provided educational film pro-



Digicel girls show off the new logo

Animal Foundation, which rescues abandoned and abused dogs off the streets.

The launching of the program also includes benefits for loyal Digicel clients, who can win a Samsung Galaxy SII phone during the inaugural special promotion. Clients spending 15 Aruban florins when paying their Digicel fee or topping off their minutes at any outlet will be eligible for the raffle.

The evening also demonstrated Digicel's new logo and a switch from being "Big Red" to deploying all the colors of the rainbow, a symbol for the diversity of their market and clientele.

by Rosalie Klein



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## Commercial banks' customer satisfaction survey 2012

A Joint Press Release by the Aruban Bankers' Association and the Centrale Bank van Aruba

ORANJESTAD -- During the period of September 3 through 23, 2012 the Aruban Bankers' Association (ABA) and the Centrale Bank van Aruba (CBA) will jointly conduct the first Commercial Banks' Customer Satisfaction Survey (CBCSS).

The CBCSS will empower the Aruban community to express its opinion on the service offered by the commercial banks. The CBCSS will provide both the ABA and the CBA with valuable information which will contribute to a more holistic picture of the banking sector, and will complement other traditional measures of bank performance. The published results will help our commercial banks provide you with the best possible service in the future.

For this purpose, the ABA and the CBA hired a group of 8 interviewers who will gather the data from a total of 600 respondents. The interviewers will be stationed at several strategic locations on the island, such as the civil registry office and the post office, and will carry an identification badge and a notification letter as proof that they are working on behalf of the ABA and the CBA. Due to the simplicity of the questions (e.g., My bank's personnel is neat in appearance) the interview should take roughly 10 minutes to complete.

Given the importance of the CBCSS for Aruba, both the ABA and the CBA call upon the Aruban public to fully cooperate with this survey. The interviewed persons can rest assure that the ABA and the CBA will treat the collected information with the highest level of confidentiality, and the results will be published in an aggregated form only. For further information please contact Mrs. Désirée Scharbaay (tel.: 5252165; e-mail [d.m.m.scharbaay@cbaruba.org](mailto:d.m.m.scharbaay@cbaruba.org)) or Mr. Jorge Ridderstaat (tel.: 5252159; e-mail: [j.r.ridderstaat@cbaruba.org](mailto:j.r.ridderstaat@cbaruba.org)) of the Research Department.

## Virgil James honored at the Divi Aruba Dutch Village



Recently, the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice gentleman, who is a loyal visitor of Aruba. Mr. Virgil James from Altaoena California, was honored as Ambassador of Goodwill of Aruba. This symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit our island for 20 or more consecutive years. Virgil says he loves the Island very much, because of the friendly people, the nice climate, beautiful beaches, and most of all the nice people working at the Divi Dutch Village. The certificate was presented to him by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with management and staff of the Divi Aruba Dutch Village.



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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### After Isaac, Louisiana and Mississippi residents face dangerous heat conditions



**A boat displaced by Hurricane Isaac sits on the edge of a road in lower Plaquemines Parish in Venice, Louisiana**

As more residents in southern Louisiana return home after Hurricane Isaac, many must now contend with a new obstacle: rebuilding their lives amid blistering temperatures and no air conditioning.

"Heat index values will continue to range in the 100- to 105-degree range, possibly higher in some locations, and (will) continue to have a greater impact on people who still do not have power," the National Weather Service said.

While many residents are focused on recovery, "we need everyone to take their risk of heat stroke seriously," said Bruce D. Greenstein, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals secretary. "This is a serious condition that can kill you."

More than 100,000 utility customers on the Gulf Coast remained without power almost a week after Isaac's landfall, while about 2,800 were

still in shelters in Louisiana and Mississippi because of flooding.

Scattered thunderstorms Tuesday through Saturday could produce "frequent lightning and heavy downpours" in parts of southeastern Louisiana and southern Mississippi, forecasters said.

Authorities are still dealing with threats posed by rain-swollen rivers and lakes, particularly in St. Tammany Parish, northeast of New Orleans.

The Pearl River, along the Mississippi state line, was projected to crest at more than 5 feet above flood stage yesterday as authorities monitored a weakened lock on an adjoining canal. Parish officials warned people to stay away from the area, but authorities lifted a mandatory evacuation order over the weekend after they released water from the lock to relieve pressure.



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## US: SEAL book on Bin Laden raid exposes state secrets

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Pentagon said yesterday a new book by a former Navy SEAL on the raid that killed Osama bin Laden contains classified information, an allegation that could expose the author to prosecution.

The Defense Department has already threatened legal

action over "No Easy Day," which went on sale in book stores yesterday, but officials had previously stopped short of saying whether the book had revealed state secrets.

"We believe that there is classified information in this book," spokesman George Little told a news conference.

Asked if the US government would take legal action against the author, Little said officials were reviewing all legal options.

"Legal avenues are available to us. I'm simply not going to get into what we may or may not decide," he said.

He reiterated the Pentagon's view that the author violated non-disclosure agreements he signed before retiring that required him to submit his first person account for review by the military before publication.

Sending in the book for review was a simple matter of "common sense" and "a no-brainer" for anyone working on national security operations, Little said.

The former Navy commando wrote "No Easy Day" under a pseudonym, Mark Owen, but has been identified in media reports as Matt Bissonnette.

In the book, published by Penguin's Dutton imprint, he describes his role in the famed raid on bin Laden's Pakistani hideout as well other operations in Iraq and Afghanistan during his 14-year career as a Navy commando.

Last week, Bissonnette's lawyer offered a rebuttal to the Pentagon, insisting the author had not broken faith with his commitments and that the non-disclosure agreements did not apply to the bin Laden operation.

## Spain and Morocco evict illegal migrants from islet



**Al Hoceima : People sunbathe on a beach in Al Hoceima in north Morocco, as the Spanish sovereign territory of Isla de Tierra is seen in the background on September 4, 2012. Spanish security forces launched a night time operation lasting into the early hours yesterday to evict 73 immigrants from the tiny, rocky islet just off Morocco, officials said. Since the uninhabited rock is Spanish, Madrid feared it could open a new doorway to migrants, many of them fleeing poverty and unrest, who are desperate to reach Europe.**

(AFP PHOTO)

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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## Authorities: Colombian 'queen of cocaine' killed

BOGOTA (AFP) - A Colombian woman known as "the queen of cocaine" for her prominence in the illegal drug trade in the 1970s was shot to death by gunmen, authorities said yesterday.

Gunmen on a motorcycle shot Griselda Blanco, 69, twice in the head Monday as she was leaving a butcher shop in the northwestern city of Medellin, they said.

Officials said Blanco had kept a low profile since her return to Colombia in 2004, after serving nearly 20 years of a 60 year sentence in the United States on drug trafficking charges.

## Dutch court tries Somalis for piracy, attempted murder

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Nine alleged Somali pirates went on trial in the Dutch port city Rotterdam yesterday charged with opening fire on Dutch marines trying to board a captured Iranian fishing boat in 2011.

The men, aged 18 to 38, allegedly opened fire on Dutch marines based on the navy frigate Tromp patrolling the pirate-infested waters in the Gulf of Aden on April 2, 2011. Two Somalis were killed in the ensuing firefight.

The marines then boarded the ship and arrested 16 Somalis and found 16 Iranian fishermen who had been held hostage on the boat for four months as well as automatic weapons and rocket launchers, according to the prosecution.

Seven of the Somalis were released and the rest brought to the Netherlands for trial on charges of piracy and attempted murder.

Court spokeswoman Michele Boonstra told AFP that

Blanco, who was alleged to have shipped 1,500 kilograms (3,300 pounds) of cocaine a month to the United States at the peak of her operation, was the first to open smuggling routes from Colombia through Florida.

She pioneered the use of human "mules" to carry cocaine into the United States, and later became a mentor to Pablo Escobar, the notorious chief of the Medellin drug cartel who later took over her operation.

She has been blamed for more than 250 killings, including that of her husband.

trial hearings would take place over the next two weeks with a verdict expected after October 8. If convicted, the men could face life in prison.



Pro-Telangana and India's main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) supporters are hit by a police water cannon as they try to climb over a barricade during a protest in New Delhi yesterday. The supporters were demanding a separate Telangana state carved out of the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, supporters said

## Hackers claim 12 million Apple IDs from FBI

WASHINGTON (AFP) - A hacker group has claimed to have obtained personal data from 12 million Apple iPhone and iPad users by breaching an FBI computer, raising concerns about government tracking.

The group called AntiSec, linked to the hacking collective known as Anonymous, posted one million Apple user identifiers on Monday purported to be part of a larger group of 12 million obtained from an FBI laptop.

Contacted by AFP, FBI spokeswoman Jenny Shearer said: "We're not commenting."

Peter Kruse, an ecrime specialist with CSIS Security Group in Denmark, said on Twitter that the leak "is real" and that he confirmed three of his own devices in the leaked data.

"Also notice that they claim to have fullname, addresses, phone numbers etc... Big ouch!" he tweeted.

Eric Hemmendinger, a security expert with Tata Communications, said the report raises concerns about the pro-

tectors of cybersecurity.

"The question is not whether it's accurate, it is why did the feds have the information and why did they not take due care to secure it," he told AFP.

Hemmendinger said that based on past reports from Anonymous and related groups, he believes the report is probably true.

"If you work in cybersecurity and your machine gets hacked, that's a pretty embarrassing scenario," he said.

Apple did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Aldo Cortesi, a security consultant living in New Zealand, called the incident "a privacy catastrophe."

"The vulnerabilities ranged from de-anonymization, to takeover of the user's gaming social network account, to the ability to completely take over the user's Facebook and Twitter accounts," he said on a blog

posting.

One website set up a database to help users determine if their device was on the hacked list of Apple unique device IDs (UDIDs).

"Quite why the FBI was collecting the UDIDs and personal information of millions of iPhone and iPad users is not yet clear -- but it's obvious that the data (and the computer it was apparently stored on) was not adequately secured," said Graham Cluley of the British security firm Sophos.

Johannes Ullrich of the SANS Internet Storm Center said it was difficult to verify the report.

"There is nothing else in the file that would implicate the FBI. So this data may very well come from another source. But it is not clear who would have a file like this," he told AFP.

Ullrich said it is unclear why the FBI, if the report were true, would have the data.

## Madagascar cattle rustling clashes claim more lives

ANTANANARIVO (AFP) - Clashes between police and cattle rustlers in Madagascar yesterday brought the death toll to over 100 since Friday, officials said.

Three police officers and four cattle thieves, called dahalo, were killed in the clashes early yesterday in the west of the country, as attacks spread from the southwest northwards, according to Exercon Michelis, spokesman for the state secretary for police.

"Around 1 a.m. this morning officers clashed with dahalo five kilometers (three miles) from the Belo sur Tsiribihina district in the Menabe region," Michelis told AFP.

"Authorities confronted 60 dahalo who had stolen 300

head of cattle in the surrounding villages," he said.

Police recovered 200 of the herd.

Theft of the humped cattle -- a prized breed in parts of southern Madagascar -- has surged and grown more violent in recent years.

Over the weekend villagers killed nearly 100 cattle rustlers in a wave of attacks in southern areas of the Indian Ocean island, in an uncommonly violent reaction against the thefts.

In June, security forces were deployed in the forests of southwestern Madagascar to crack down on hundreds of armed cattle rustlers. Several deaths of policemen and thieves were reported and around 100 thieves were arrested.



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## Health & Living

### Dengue fever makes deadly comeback in Greece

ATHENS (AFP) - An elderly Greek man has died from complications of dengue fever, marking a reappearance of the mosquito-borne disease 85 years after its eradication from Greece, officials said Tuesday.

The man in his 80s, from Agrinio in western Greece, died August 30 of haemorrhagic fever while in hospital in Patras, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement.

Dengue fever, a viral disease, had been wiped out since an epidemic hit Greece in 1927-28.

But health officials across Europe have in recent years been on the lookout for a recurrence of the disease because of the increasing presence of the Asian tiger mosquito, capable of spreading dengue fever and other tropical diseases in temperate Europe.

Greek officials first spotted the bug in 2003 and it has gained a foothold in about 20 European countries over the last decade or so, mainly in Mediterranean countries but also in Germany, Belgium and

the Netherlands.

Health officials said they would send a medical team to the Agrinio region to see if it is worth spreading insecticides.

Several cases of dengue fever were reported in Croatia and France in 2010.

The Asian tiger mosquito can also carry West Nile virus, and Greek authorities called on residents to take anti-mosquito measures after a limited outbreak in the Athens suburbs this year.

### Three mummified bodies found in Japan home

TOKYO (AFP) - Police who broke into a locked home in Japan after neighbours complained of a foul smell found three partially mummified and almost naked bodies, a spokesman said Tuesday.

The bodies, which were partly decomposed and partly desiccated, were wearing only underwear in the living room of the two-storey house in Namerikawa, 250 kilometres (160 miles) northwest of Tokyo.

The dead were believed to be Shioichi Osaki, a 78-year-old pensioner who owned the house, his 45-year-old daughter and mentally handicapped 40-year-old son, a local police spokesman said by telephone.

Neighbours alerted police after not seeing the three for around a month.

"We believe the Osakis have been dead for quite some time as their bodies were partly mummified," the official said. "Neighbours told us they had noticed a strange odour emanating from the house for a few weeks."

An autopsy was being performed to determine the causes of their deaths, he said, adding foul play was not suspected.

### French trailer park sex slavery appeal case opens

BOBIGNY (AFP) - The appeal trial began Tuesday of four people convicted of forcing a young French woman

into a life of slavery and sexual violence in a trailer park near Paris.

The trial in Bobigny near Paris centres on Sabrina, a woman now aged 32, who was brought to a Paris hospital in March 2006 suffering from malnutrition and signs of torture.

Sabrina told police she had been tortured and held as a slave in a trailer park off the highway in Claye-Souilly near Paris.

She had lost nearly all of her teeth, her ears had been burned with a clothes iron, her body was scarred from cigarette burns and she weighed only 34 kilogrammes (75 pounds).

In December 2010 her parents, Daniel and Denise, were convicted of human trafficking for having allowed Sabrina to be sexually abused, including in exchange for a reduction on the price of a used car.

Her father was sentenced to 20 years in prison and her mother to eight years. The parents' last names have been withheld to prevent identification of Sabrina.

Another couple, Franck Franoix and his wife Florence Carrasco, were both sentenced to 30 years on charges of rape, kidnapping, torture and forced slavery in the case.



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### 42 child soldiers 'released from Myanmar army'

YANGON (AFP) - Dozens of child soldiers have been discharged from the Myanmar military, state media said Tuesday, months after the country agreed with the United Nations to curb the use of underage recruits.

Forty-two minors were allowed to resign from the armed forces and were handed over to their parents in Yangon on Monday, according to the official New Light of Myanmar newspaper.

There are believed to be

thousands of under-18s in Myanmar's state army and ethnic armed groups, although the exact figure is unknown.

In June Myanmar signed an agreement with the UN pledging to prevent the use of child soldiers and allow access to military units to check for underage recruits.

The agreement was part of efforts by Myanmar's reformist government to shed its international pariah image following the end of decades of military rule last year.



- Children are best kept in rear-facing car seats until age two or until they have reached the height and weight maximums set by the car seat manufacturer, according to recommendations from a pediatricians' group. Though the recommendations were meant to encourage parents to keep kids in the seats longer, many parents interpreted that wording to mean they should put their children in a forward-facing seat at their first birthday -- way too soon, said Dr. Benjamin Hoffman. The recommendations also say that a forward-facing car seat with a harness offers more protection than a booster seat, while a booster seat is better than a seat belt alone. Kids should be kept in a forward-facing car seat as long as possible, even through age 8 if their weight or height is under the limit allowed by their child safety seats, according to the new guidelines. Studies show that the car seats reduce the risk of child injury up to 82 percent and the risk of death by 28 percent, compared to wearing seat belts. Children should ride in the backseat until they are 13 years old.

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## Sci-Tech

*Hundreds of homes damaged in Philippines quake*

CAGAYAN DE ORO, (AFP) - More than 800 homes and businesses were damaged when a 5.6-magnitude earthquake rocked the southern Philippines early Tuesday, officials said.

Cracks snaked across walls and roofs collapsed when the quake struck the southern island of Mindanao before dawn, said Patrick Callanta, operations chief of the civil defence office in Cagayan de Oro city.

One person was injured by falling debris.

Disaster officials in the region said 544 houses, shops and other commercial buildings sustained damage in Valencia city, populated by 163,000 people.

The lone casualty was hit by falling debris in the adjacent town of Maramag, where 316 buildings were damaged, Callanta said.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the quake struck at 3:44am (1944 GMT Monday) and the epicentre was plotted near Maramag, a town of about 90,000 people.

The Philippines sits on the Pacific Rim of Fire -- a belt around the Pacific Ocean dotted by active volcanoes and unstable ocean trenches.

A 7.6-magnitude quake hit the country's east coast late Friday, triggering a tsunami alert that forced more than 130,000 to flee their homes and causing a landslide that killed one person in Cagayan de Oro.

A 5.9 quake also struck at sea off Mindanao on Monday, but caused no damage or casualties.

## Cambodia to expel Pirate Bay co-founder: police

PHNOM PENH (AFP) - Cambodia said Tuesday that it would deport a co-founder of The Pirate Bay filesharing website who faces a one-year prison sentence in Sweden for promoting copyright infringement.

Gottfrid Svartholm Warg, 27, was arrested in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh on Thursday at Sweden's request. But the two countries have no extradition treaty and it is unclear when and where he will be deported.

"We have decided to deport him from Cambodia according to our immigration laws," national police spokesman Kirth Chantharith said.

Founded in 2003, The Pirate Bay -- which boasts more than 30 million users -- makes it possible to skirt copyright fees and share music, film and other files using bit torrent technol-

ogy, or peer-to-peer links offered on the site.

Warg's fellow co-founders Fredrik Neij and Peter Sunde, as well as financier Carl Lundstroem, all had their 12-month sentences reduced to between four and 10 months on appeal in late 2010.

They were ordered to pay a total of 46 million kronor (\$6.9 million) in damages for copyright infringement to the music and movie industry.

Warg did not attend his appeal hearing and his one-year sentence was upheld. An international warrant was issued for his arrest.

During their trial, the defendants maintained that file-sharing services can be used both legally and illegally, and insisted their activities were within the law.



The wild population of the Tasmanian devil, a ferocious marsupial threatened by facial tumours spread by biting, has slumped by more than 90 percent since the facial cancer first surfaced in 1996, and there is neither a cure nor a vaccine. The rat-like carnivores are reclusive but social creatures, which sleep by day and forage by night. They do not live in groups but encounter each other quite often, for mating or feeding around carcasses, and this is when they bite each other. The disease is transmitted through cancer cells that break away from the tumour and infect the biter. Devils once roamed Australia and at one point were considered by colonial farmers to be a pest. Since about 1600 they have been isolated to Tasmania, an island state south of the mainland.

## Portugal seeks EU help to contain deadly wild-fires



LISBON (AFP) - Portugal has sought EU help to battle wildfires raging in the centre of the country for the past few days that have left at least one man dead, civil protection officials said.

Two people were also injured when a Russian-built water-carrying helicopter crashed Monday as it was trying to douse the flames, which have destroyed at least two houses and a factory.

About 3,000 firefighters have been brought in to battle about 20 bushfires that broke out on Sunday, with temperatures in the past few days exceeding 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit).

A 54-year-old man was found burnt to death in the village of Urqueira near the town of Ourem on Monday after apparently trying to save his chicken farm, local mayor Paulo Fonseca said, according to the Lusa news agency.

Two firefighters have already lost their lives this summer and the Portuguese civil protection agency said it has

called for help from the European Union to try to contain the fires.

Portugal has been in the grip of a severe drought since the start of the year, and fires have destroyed over 70,000 hectares (173,000 acres) between January and August, according to The Institute of Conservation and Forestry.

Police said they have detained around 40 suspected arsonists this summer.

Meanwhile Water-dumping aircraft from Spain and France began yesterday night helping Portugal's battle to halt the spread of the fire.

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## Finance

# ILO: Bleak outlook for young jobseekers worldwide

GENEVA (AFP) - Already chilling youth unemployment figures around the world are set to worsen as the impact from the eurozone debt crisis spreads, an International Labour Organisation report said yesterday.

"As the euro area crisis continues in its second year, the impacts are spreading further, slowing down economies from East Asia to Latin America," the UN labour agency pointed out.

This, the organisation predicted, will contribute to a 0.2 percentage point rise in the global youth unemployment rate, from a forecasted 12.7 percent this year to 12.9 percent in 2017.

The hike would come even though the developed nation epicenters of the euro crisis are expected to see their devastatingly high youth unemployment figures dip slightly, ILO said.

"The projected decline in youth unemployment in the developed economies region is not expected to be enough to pull the global rate downwards," it said in a statement.

Meanwhile, regions like Sub-Saharan Africa, which had expected faster improvements in their youth employment rates

"will now take longer to revert to levels seen prior to the global financial crisis," it added.

The expected drop in youth jobless numbers in developed economies, from a forecasted 17.5 percent this year to 15.6 percent in 2017, also gave no reason to celebrate, the organisation said.

This is because the decline would arise "principally because discouraged young people are withdrawing from the labour market and not because of stronger hiring activity among youngsters."

The ILO also cautioned that viewing youth unemployment by region disguised large variations between countries, especially in Europe, where Spain and Greece are struggling with rates over 50 percent, while less than 10 percent of youths in Germany and Switzerland, for instance, are unemployed.

In light of the "substantial risk of another significant downward spiral that could bring the world economy closer to another global recession by the end of 2012," the labour organisation stressed the need for government to urgently act to curb joblessness among young people.

"The ILO is calling for targeted measures to improve the labour market situation, especially for youth," it said, adding that governments should help provide employment and training guarantees for young people.

Pointing to programs in the Nordic countries and Austria as examples, it stressed that "estimates show that such programs can come at very limited costs" -- far less than "the additional costs that come from young unemployed people permanently losing touch with the labour market."

## Santander floats up to a quarter of Mexican subsidiary

MADRID (AFP) - Spanish banking titan Santander launched yesterday a public sale of up to 24.9 percent of its Mexican subsidiary to raise a maximum 3.41 billion euros (\$4.3 billion).

The price valued the group's entire Santander Mexico business at up to 13.7 billion euros.

"This will be the largest equity transaction in Latin America so far in 2012 and the largest placement of shares ever in a Mexican company," the group said in a statement.

Santander plans to list the shares on about September 26 in Mexico and in New York, the group said, which would make it the only New York-listed Mexican financial institution.

The group said it had filed separate, preliminary prospectuses with the Mexican Stock Exchange and the US Securities and Exchange Commission yesterday, kicking off a three-week sales roadshow.

"The transaction we are presenting today is another step in our strategy of listing our subsidiaries," group chairman Emilio Botin said in a company statement.

"Our three largest subsidiaries in Latin America will be among the top 100 banks in the world by stock market value," he said, after the group's earlier listings of its Brazilian and Chilean businesses.

Santander, the biggest bank in the eurozone by market value, said the sale of a slice of its Mexican business will target both individuals and institutions.

It plans to divide the operation into two parts: one sale in Mexico for 20 percent of the shares on offer and one in the United States for the remaining 80 percent.

"We want to continue playing a part in the growth of Mexico. I am confident that this transaction marks a new phase in our bank's history in Mexico and will strengthen our plans for growth and development in the country," Botin said.

Santander said it planned to fix a price for the shares on September 25, with a first day of trading on September 26.



Current as of: 09/04/2012				
	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.79	1.81	1.83
Britiain	GBP	2.76	2.81	2.87
Switzerland	CHF	186.36	187.08	187.88
Netherlands	EUR	222.01	224.04	226.29
Sweden	SEK	25.66	26.38	27.18
Denmark	DKK	29.10	29.82	30.62
Norway	NOK	29.77	30.49	31.29
Japan	JPY	225.21	227.27	229.55
(per 100)				

All rates for amounts up to AWG 100.00 per item.

## Dutch retail giant Ahold says may sell stake in ICA

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Dutch retail group Ahold said yesterday it has begun looking at selling off its 60-percent stake in Scandinavian supermarket chain ICA, worth an estimated 1.5-2.4 billion euros (\$1.9-3.0 billion).

"Ahold has today announced that it is exploring strategic options regarding its 60 percent holding in ICA, the Scandinavian retailer," the company said in a statement.

An IPO on the Stockholm stock exchange "is one of the alternatives being considered," it added.

The review of its "strategic options" should take between six months and a year, the company said, adding that it wanted to focus its strategy on wholly-owned companies.

ICA is co-owned by Ahold (60 percent) and the Swedish investment fund Hakon Invest AB (40 percent). However, decision-making weight is split 50-50.

Hakon Invest AB said that its share in ICA was not for sale and noted that "the owners have a mutual controlling interest in ICA AB stipulating mutually agreed decisions."



Berlin-Schönefeld Apt : Aerial view shows the "Willy Brandt" Berlin-Brandenburg International (BER) Airport on September 4, 2012 in Schoenefeld, near Berlin. As German media reported, the opening of the airport will be postponed again and is apparently scheduled now for the end of October 2013. (AFP PHOTO)

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## Moon's death threatens unity of Unification Church



SEOUL (AFP) - The death of Sun Myung Moon robs his Unification Church of the glue that sustained its global following as a cohesive religious and financial force even as membership dwindled from its 1980s peak, analysts say.

A messianic movement built on the rubble of the Korean War and exported to countries such as the United States where it found favour with both conservatives and disaffected ex-hippies, the church now faces an uncertain future.

While it claims a worldwide following of three million, experts suggest the core membership is far smaller although it still carries a commercial clout that allows the church to punch way above its doctrinal weight.

Without Moon's unifying presence, there is potential for conflict between his sons who control the church's religious and business arms and who do not command the same loyalty as their father from overseas chapters.

While the media-coined "Moonie" moniker was intended to belittle, the fact remains that it was very much Moon's church -- founded, driven and maintained by the sheer force of his personality and the business acumen of loyal members.

Founded in 1954 a year after the Korean War, the church, like all new religious movements, initially struggled to assert itself against the establishment.

Mainstream Christian groups were particularly hostile, denouncing as heretical Moon's claim to have been personally chosen by Jesus.

Moon's survival strategy, according to Kim Heung-Soo, professor of Korean Christianity at Mokwon University, was to avoid a doctrinal conflict and instead forge close ties with the military regime then ruling South Korea.

"One way he did this was by promoting anti-communism as one of the church's major creeds," Kim said.

"He used the same strategy when he moved to the US. He was a vocal proponent of the Vietnam War, hailing it as the war against communists, and publicly supported President Nixon during the Watergate scandal," he added.

The timing of the church's expansion to the United States -- Moon moved there in 1972 -- was fortuitous for its growth, according to David Bromley, professor of religious studies at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Rapid recruitment saw the church's membership swell from an initial group of 100 missionaries to around 10,000 in just a few years.

However, Bromley believes the church's influence was exaggerated, partly as a result of Moon's high-profile courtship of senior US political figures and also the accusations of widespread brainwashing levelled by the church's opponents.

Where Moon's church had a real advantage was its cultivation of business-minded members -- particularly in the US and Japan -- who helped build it into a multi-billion dollar commercial empire.

"It quickly became a business organisation as much as a religious one," said Tark.

Towards the end of the 1980s, membership began to fall off as the result of various scandals and political and social changes in South Korea and elsewhere that clipped Moon's influence.

## Actor Duncan dead at 54: reps



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Michael Clarke Duncan, who was nominated for an Academy Award for his role in "The Green Mile," an adaptation of a Stephen King work, died Monday at age 54, his representatives said.

Duncan "passed away peacefully today," the manager, Dan Spilo, told AFP. "He was a great man with a huge heart, and it was an honor and a privilege to represent him."

Duncan's girlfriend Omarosa Manigault, one-time

star of the reality television show "The Apprentice," asked for privacy through Duncan's publicist Joy Fehily.

The actor "suffered a myocardial infarction on July 13 and never fully recovered," Fehily said in a statement.

Born in Chicago on December 10, 1957, Duncan moved to Los Angeles to pursue his acting career. The imposing actor, who was 6'5" (1.96 meters), worked as a bodyguard for Will Smith and Jamie Foxx while securing smaller roles.

His breakthrough performance came when he was cast as convict John Coffey in "The Green Mile," a man wrongly accused of child murder and rape, who has supernatural powers. Tom Hanks co-starred as a prison guard.

Beyond his Oscar nomination, Duncan also earned Golden Globe and Screen Actors Guild nods.

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**HOLLYWOOD:** Television personality Ellen DeGeneres poses while laying down beside her just unveiled Star along Hollywood Boulevard during a ceremony yesterday in Hollywood, California. The hostess of 'The Ellen DeGeneres Show' which enters its tenth season on television on September 10th, is the recipient of the 2,477th Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

**AFP PHOTO**

## Gold Coast Aruba: Great savings for large families on holiday rentals



Aruba's newest and most innovative gated community has enjoyed steady sales since breaking ground, as many are finding the secure surroundings and outstanding amenities are just what they were looking for before considering purchasing property on the island. Some owners are using the villas or town homes as vacation retreats rather than full time and are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," noted Gold Coast developer Fito Croes. To assist in the demand for more complete facilities for groups and families, famed hotelier Ed Malone has been placed in charge of the rental program.

Staying at Gold Coast is a very attractive proposition for those traveling with groups that would require multiple hotel rooms. Two and three bedroom Villas or Town Homes accommodate large numbers and offer extensive amenities along with a final cost resulting in considerable savings. The community is minutes to the best beaches and all the casino action, and offers a quiet and secluded getaway with two swimming pools and specialized services with more on the way, such as a fitness room, tennis courts and mini-mall. Ed can arrange maid service, babysitters, caterers, airline pick-up

and drop-off; they even boast a shopping service to stock your shelves before arrival.

Gold Coast accommodations are elegant and spacious, offering privacy for parents or a few couples.



Beautifully appointed kitchens and bathrooms grace each abode; barbecues and lounges are provided for friendly cookouts and truly savoring the island life. All homes come with cable TV,



high-speed fiber-optic Internet connection, individual washer/dryer, and are fully air-conditioned. Cribs, high chairs and hair dryers are available for a modest fee. Concierge services to arrange

rental cars, spa appointments, activities and restaurant reservations are all part of the package.

Check-in for your holiday escape is conducted in the comfort of your vacation home, not while waiting online at check-in desk. In every way, Gold Coast seeks to pamper their guests while providing them with the feeling of being in a cozy community, not the normally bustling resort, particularly experienced during the major holidays. If you wish an optimal vacation experience with great savings, visit their website: [www.goldecoastaruba.com](http://www.goldecoastaruba.com) to get acquainted with the community and the layout, details and availability of accommodations, or call 586-2200 to talk personally to a Gold Coast representative.

## Eat like a local at The Queen's restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



Varella, Luisa and the next generation of chef



Keshi Yena with plaintains, vegetables and pica

An elegant décor with a breezy terrace overlooking Palm Beach welcomes guests to Varella Innocencia's very popular restaurant showcasing authentic local cuisine: The Queen's.

They may have moved from Oranjestad to hipper new digs in Palm Beach Plaza, but the food and prices are strictly native, which is what first won this charming eatery their loyal clientele. Varella's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, acknowledged on the menu with items such as "Carni Stoba di Mamachi" - "Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak, along with local delicacies like Keshi Yena - "Full Cheese."

This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lends that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously picturesque meal.

One of the distinctions of

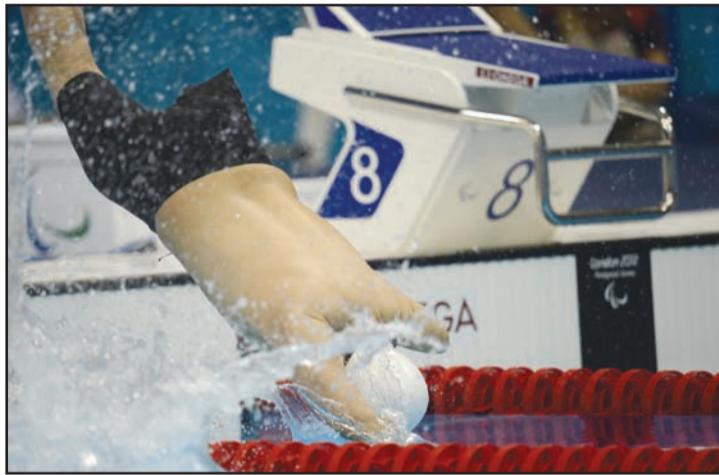
Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.)

Seafood main courses range from \$14 for Catch of the Day Aruban Style to \$18 for shrimp and \$20 for a mixed seafood platter with shrimp, fish, squid, scallops and mussels. Meat dishes such as BBQ Chicken and Ribs or Grilled Tenderloin range from \$12 to \$16, each including a choice of 2 side dishes; all quite yummy and bargain-priced to boot!

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the way to truly eat like a local. They are open from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM, daily, offering indoor and outdoor dining. Aside from an extensive menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't forget to ask about what isn't on the menu!

# London Paralympics 2012..

## Records tumble as Pistorius escapes punishment



North Korea Rim Ju-Song

LONDON (AFP) - The London Paralympics were on course to break an unprecedented number of world records as the Games hit half-

years ago.

In the first half of the Games to Tuesday, 137 new world records were set, with a further 81 new Paralympic

"no disciplinary action against Oscar" after the 25-year-old hit out at Oliveira following his defeat, when the double below-the-knee amputee sensationally lost his first T44 200m race in nine years.

He claimed his rival and other competitors in the race had a much longer stride length due to his "taller" carbon fibre prostheses.

Reclusive North Korea meanwhile made its maiden appearance at the Paralympics but 16-year-old swimmer Rim Ju-Song trailed in last in his S6 50m freestyle swimming heat.

"I'm very honoured to be the first Paralympian. I'm encouraged that many people cheered for me," said the wild card, who lost his left arm and left leg in a construction site accident aged six.

The normally raucous 80,000-seater Olympic Stadium fell silent for the men's F11 long jump final, in which athletes with little or no vision take off aided only by the sound of their coaches' calls.

To give the competitors the best chance of performing well, the venue descended into a rare hush.

"I have been waiting for this day for almost 10 years," said Ukraine's Ruslan Katyshev won the 2012 Games gold with a personal best of 6.46 metres.

Kovan Abdulraheem was to become the first Kurdish athlete to represent Iraq in the Paralympic Games when the 24-year-old takes part in a discus final.

Abdulraheem, who was born with dwarfism, will also compete in the javelin and shot put this week.

Britain's Prince Harry, making a low-key return to public duties after naked pictures emerged of him partying in Las Vegas, watched the swimming and goalball and met British discus thrower Derek Derenalagi, who was initially pronounced dead when he lost both his legs in a blast in Afghanistan in 2007.

In the wheelchair tennis, British flag bearer Peter Norfolk -- dubbed the "quadfather" -- crashed out in what he called an "appalling" shock quarter-final defeat in his bid for a third straight quad Paralympics gold.

Brazil won the first boccia gold of the Games, beating the Czech Republic 5-3 in the BC4 mixed pairs.

He also said there would be

Ruslan Katyshev of Ukraine is watched by his guide



Kovan Abdulraheem of Iraq warms up

way Tuesday, while Oscar Pistorius found out he will not be sanctioned for his outburst.

Around London, the wheelchair fencing got under way and the first boccia medals were handed out at the ExCeL exhibition centre, while the equestrian events came to a close with Britain topping the medal table at Greenwich Park.

The IPC said the 2012 athletes were on course to break more world records than the 279 achieved in Beijing four

bests.

Some 197 medals had been won by athletes from 63 countries, in the 228 completed medal events of the 503 at the Games, with China well ahead of Great Britain, Russia and Australia at the top of the table.

"The fact is our athletes are getting better. They're training full-time. This is not just a hobby sport. It's professional sport at its very best," said IPC spokesman Craig Spence.

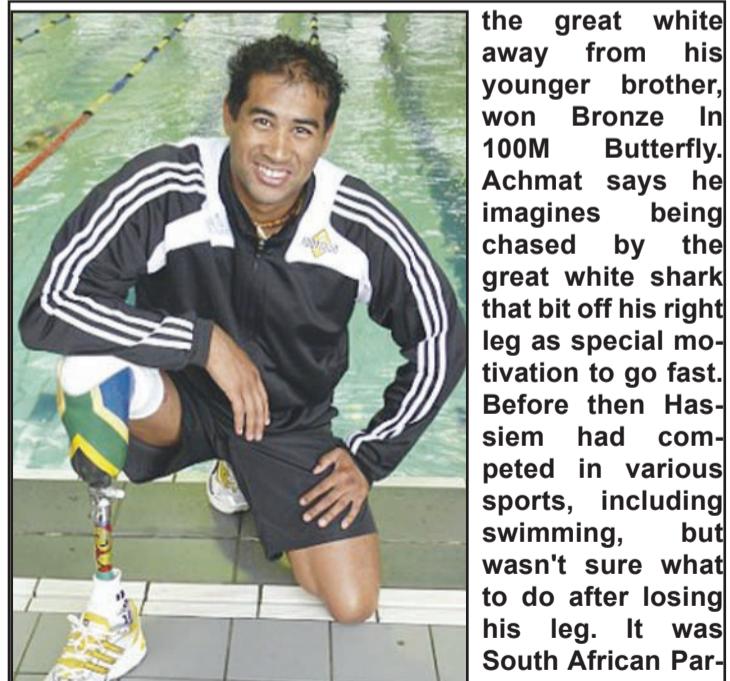
He also said there would be



Venezuela's Jesus Aguilar reacts after crashing just before the finish line of the men's 800m T53 round 1 heat 2.



Two-time gold medalist Lin Tzu-hui of Taiwan won a bronze medal in the women's 75kg powerlifting event at the London Paralympics yesterday. Lin (30) lifted 137 kilograms in her first attempt but failed to make the 141 kg and 143 kg lifts. Lin, 30, expressed disappointment in her performance, saying she felt more pressured to win this year and that her competitors were apparently better than those at the 2008 Beijing Paralympics.



The South African Paralympic swimmer Achmat Hassiem, who was attacked by a shark off the coast of Cape Town six years ago after he lured the great white away from his younger brother, won Bronze In 100M Butterfly. Achmat says he imagines being chased by the great white shark that bit off his right leg as special motivation to go fast. Before then Hassiem had competed in various sports, including swimming, but wasn't sure what to do after losing his leg. It was South African Paralympic swimming champion Natalie du Toit who encouraged Hassiem to get back into the water. Before long, he started breaking his country's Paralympic records.



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## Contador scenting fairytale return win

(AFP) - Spain's two-time Tour de France champion Alberto Contador stands tantalisingly close to a stunning win in the Tour of Spain, his first major race since returning from a two year doping ban.

But while the 29-year-old - who still protests his innocence over the minute trace of clenbuterol found in his urine on the 2010 Tour de France - is just 28 seconds behind overall leader Joaquim "Purito" Rodriguez, he admits it will be tough for him to claw the deficit back.

"I am in second place now and would like to exchange it for first place, but I am aware of how difficult it will be to



file photo 2011 - Contador

win," Contador told a news conference in the northern city of Comillas during the second rest day of the race.

"It is complicated because there is not much more ground to cover, but every day there will be possibilities in the Tour to catch up.

"I am going to give all I have no matter what result I have, I have my own racing style and it does not even occur to me to do anything but to try to win."

Rodriguez - who suffered heartbreak in this year's Tour of Italy ending up second overall having entered the final stage in the lead - extended his overall lead over Contador by six seconds during Monday's 16th stage and is now within striking distance of securing his first ever major Tour win.

The 33-year-old fended off a series of attacks from Contador during the steep final climb of the 183.5-kilometre (114-mile) mountain ride from Gijon to Cuitu Negru in northern Spain to finish third. Contador finished fourth.

Rodriguez said he does not see himself as the winner of this year's Tour but was optimistic about his chances.

Spain's Alejandro Valverde of Movistar, who picked up a

stage win in the Tour de France this year, is in third place in the overall standings followed by Britain's Chris Froome of Sky.

Valverde is two minutes, four seconds behind the leader with Froome four minutes and 52 seconds behind Rodriguez.

The Tour is Contador's first major cycling race since his two-year drugs ban ended on August 6.

He said he was happy to see so many fans cheering him on along the route of the race.

The Tour of Spain continues on today with a 187.3-kilometre ride between Santander and Fuente De, a second category mountain climb.



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## Tennis: Sharapova-Bartoli finish postponed

NEW YORK (AFP) - Struggling Maria Sharapova will have another day to regroup after her rain-haltered US Open quarter-final match against French 11th seed Marion Bartoli was postponed for today by tournament officials.

Tuesday's third rain delay arrived with Bartoli leading the Russian third seed 4-0 at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

With more rain expected for the next few hours, officials

decided to delay the conclusion of the Sharapova-Bartoli match, allowing for the start of Andy Roddick's men's fourth-round match against Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro to start when dry conditions return.

Spanish fourth seed David Ferrer leads French 13th seed Richard Gasquet 7-5, 7-6 (7/2), 4-3 in a men's fourth-round match also halted by showers.

## Boxing: Klitschko puts politics aside to fight Charr



MOSCOW (AFP) - Ukrainian world boxing champion Vitali Klitschko on Tuesday said he had temporarily put his political aspirations to one side for his heavyweight title fight against Germany's Manuel Charr.

Klitschko, 40, leads the aptly named UDAR (punch) party in Ukraine which is currently running third in opinion

polls ahead of legislative elections on October 28 and is vehemently critical of President Viktor Yanukovych.

The Beirut-born Charr sought to goad his opponent ahead of the fight, telling Klitschko that boxing the Ukrainian was "a present that I have dreamed off all my life" and that he expected to win by knockout.

## Football: Alonso backs automatic World Cup qualification

MADRID (AFP) - Defending World Cup holders should qualify automatically for the next competition, Real Madrid midfielder Xabi Alonso, part of the Spain squad that won the 2010 tournament, said Tuesday.

"Logically, as in many competitions and sports, the champion has the right to defend their title. FIFA does not allow for it but I think it is sufficiently important and fair that the winner have the right to qualify," he told a news conference ahead of Spain's friendly Friday against Saudi Arabia.

World Cup holders stopped getting automatic entry in the next competition at the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

In making the changes to the rules, football world governing body FIFA argued that the four years between competitions was a long time for any team to retain its strength.

After taking on Saudi Arabia in Pontevedra in northeastern Spain, the 2008 and 2012 European champions will face Georgia in Tbilisi on September 11 in their opening qualifying match for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

"I think many of us are in a fortunate position where we are part of a group that has made history, but we are

aware of the future that lies ahead. We don't want to rest on our laurels," said Alonso.

"We want to win more trophies. When the time comes when we stop winning we will face up to it in the best possible way," the 30-year-old added.

Alonso, who was outstanding as Spain retained their European title earlier this year, welcomed the return of David Villa, Spain's all-time leading scorer, to the national team after an eight month absence due to injury.

"It is great news for us. Villa brings much bite, he is a threat to the defence of our rivals, he creates a great deal of uncertainty," he said.

Last week Spain coach Vicente del Bosque included Villa in his squad for the matches against Saudi Arabia and Georgia.

The 30-year-old has not played for Spain since he broke his left leg last December while playing with Barcelona at the Club World Cup.

Alonso said the Spanish national team had "a great deal of respect" for Saudi Arabia's squad.

"They have taken part in many World Cups. We will play with the same professionalism and respect with which we face all our rivals," he said.

## Tennis: Azarenka ousts Stosur to reach US Open semis



NEW YORK (AFP) - World No. 1 Victoria Azarenka advanced to the US Open semi-finals for the first time on yesterday day with a 6-1, 4-6, 7-6 (7/5) victory over seventh-seeded defending champion Samantha Stosur of Australia.

The 23-year-old top seed from Belarus ensured that she will remain atop the world rankings no matter what happens the rest of the way in the year's final Grand Slam tourna-

ment on the Flushing Meadows hardcourts.

Reigning Australian Open champion Azarenka advanced to a semi-final against either French 11th seed Marion Bartoli or Russian third seed Maria Sharapova, who completed a career Grand Slam by winning this year's French Open.

Azarenka, who was playing in her first US Open quarter-final, weathered a 75-minute rain delay in the first set to win

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for the sixth time in as many top-level matches against Stosur.

In the final set tie-breaker, Azarenka raced to a 4-0 lead after Stosur sent a forehand beyond the baseline but the Aussie battled back to level at 5-5 on an overhead smash winner.

Azarenka seized a 6-5 lead on a drop volley after Stosur's shot struck the net cord and plopped over and won the match when the Aussie sent a backhand wide after two hours and 23 minutes.

It was the first US Open women's match in the last-eight or deeper to go to a third-set tie-breaker since 2007, Azarenka saying it was a greater mental challenge than physical one at that point.

"Physically we were already giving all on every point," she said. "You accept to take that risk or take that challenge. You

cannot wait for a mistake. You have to make your opportunities."

Azarenka avoided becoming the first US Open women's top seed to crash out before the semis since Dinara Safina's third-round exit in 2009.

But no women's top seed has won a Grand Slam title since Serena Williams at Wimbledon in 2010 and no US Open women's top seed has taken the title since Justine Henin in 2007.

Azarenka broke Stosur in the first and third games of the opening set before showers struck Arthur Ashe Stadium and halted the match after 11 minutes.

When play resumed, Azarenka added a break to close out the set, which she claimed after 30 minutes when Stosur sent a backhand beyond the baseline. It was the first set

Stosur had lost in the tournament.

Stosur, seeking her first title since lifting the trophy last year on the same court, broke to open the second set.

Azarenka broke back in the next game but Stosur broke again to 4-3 with a forehand down-the-line winner and held twice to force a third set. It was the first set Azarenka had dropped in the tournament.

Stosur surrendered a break in the fourth game of the third set by netting a backhand, broke back in the next game on a forehand service return winner, then handed back the break by sending a backhand long to give Azarenka a 4-2 edge.

But Stosur answered again, firing back-to-back forehand winners to break back as both then held serve into the tie-breaker while the tension mounted.